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REMARKS

Claims 8 and 16 have been amended. Claims 1 – 31 are pending in this Application. Reconsideration and further examination is respectfully requested.

Drawings

The drawings were objected to because the reference sign 104 was missing in Fig. 3, and the reference sign 300 in Fig. 3 is not mentioned in the description. Figure 3 has been corrected to add the reference sign 104 and delete the reference sign 300. Corrected drawings are attached to this Amendment.

Claim Rejections – 35 USC § 112

Claims 8 – 14 and 16 – 22 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter of the invention. In particular, the phrase “the neighbor” lacked antecedent basis. Claims 8 and 16 have been amended to recite “a neighbor”. The Applicant therefore respectfully requests that this rejection be withdrawn.

Claim Rejections – 35 USC § 103

1. Claims 1 – 2, 4 – 10, 12 – 18, 20 – 25, and 27 – 31 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Applicant's Figure 3 in view of "Internetworking with TCP/IP" by Douglas E. Comer ("Comer"). This rejection is respectfully traversed.

Applicant's exemplary independent claim 1 recites:

"A method for distributing link state information by a node to a neighbor in a communication system, the method comprising:  
send a first link state advertisement protocol message to the neighbor; and  
sending a second link state advertisement protocol message to the neighbor prior to receiving an acknowledgement message from the neighbor for the first link state advertisement protocol message."

In contrast, Comer describes the use of sliding windows for TCP messages. TCP messages are data messages. The Applicant's claimed link state information, and link state advertisement protocol messages, on the other hand, are link state routing control protocol messages. Routing control protocols are used to determine how to route data messages, such as TCP messages, across a network. The prior art as shown in Figure 3 of the Applicant's application shows that link state routing protocol control messages have always used a "stop and wait" mechanism for acknowledgements. There has not heretofore been any attempt to use anything other than a "stop and wait" mechanism for transmission and acknowledgement of the highly important link state routing protocol control messages. Comer deals only with data

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transmission, and does not address the particular complications of routing at all. One would not be motivated to look to Comer to solve a routing problem.

The Office Action suggests that one might combine Comer with Applicant's Figure 3 "for delivery reliability and a more efficient use of network bandwidth". The Applicant disagrees. The prior art "stop and wait" mechanism maximizes reliability. No one has heretofore recognized that routing protocol packets utilize significant bandwidth. So, again, one would not look to Comer to solve the problem that the Applicant's invention has solved.

Therefore, no combination of Applicant's Figure 3 with Comer teaches or suggests the Applicant's claimed method wherein a link state advertisement protocol message is sent to a neighbor prior to receiving an acknowledgement message from the neighbor. The Applicant therefore respectfully asserts that independent claim 1 and its dependent claims 2-3 are in condition for allowance for the same reasons as set forth with regard to claim 1.

The Applicant's independent claim 4 sets forth a sliding window for sending up to a predetermined maximum number of link state advertisement protocol messages to the neighbor. The Applicant therefore respectfully asserts that independent claim 4 and its dependent claims 5 - 6 are in condition for allowance.

Applicant's independent claim 7 sets forth a device comprising a link state routing protocol having a sliding window ... for sending link state advertisement protocol messages. Applicant therefore respectfully asserts that independent claim 7 and its dependent claims 8 - 14 are in condition for allowance.

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Applicant's independent claim 15 is a program product claim with limitations similar to those of claim 7. The Applicant therefore respectfully asserts that independent claim 15 and its dependent claims 16 - 22 are in condition for allowance for the same reasons as set forth with regard to claim 1.

Applicant's independent claim 23 is a system claim also reciting a sliding window mechanism as applied to link state advertisement protocol messages. Applicant therefore respectfully asserts that independent claim 23 and its dependent claims 24-29 are in condition for allowance for the same reasons as set forth with regard to claim 1.

Applicant's independent claim 30 sets forth a link state routing protocol comprising a sliding window mechanism. Applicant therefore respectfully asserts that independent claim 30 and its dependent claim 31 are in condition for allowance for the same reasons as set forth with regard to claim 1.

2. Claims 3, 11, 19, and 26 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Applicant's prior art Figure 3 in view of Comer and further in view of Sridhar, U.S. patent number 6,266,701 B1. This rejection is respectfully traversed.

Claims 3, 11, 19, and 26 are dependent upon claims 1, 7, 15, and 23 respectively. Sridhar, like Comer, does not address routing protocols. Thus, Sridhar adds nothing further to Comer to teach or suggest the independent claims 1, 7, 15, and 23. The Applicant therefore respectfully asserts that claims 3, 11, 19, and 26 are allowable for the same reasons as set forth with regard to claim 1.

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The Applicant has made a diligent effort to place the claims in condition for allowance. However, should there remain unresolved issues that require adverse action, it is respectfully requested that the Examiner telephone Mary Steubing, Applicant's Attorney at 978-264-6664 so that such issues may be resolved as expeditiously as possible.

For these reasons, and in view of the above amendments, this application is now considered to be in condition for allowance and such action is earnestly solicited.

Respectfully Submitted,

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Date

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